

NCA

VOC FOR PGM/FN
BACKGROUND NO. 5-6206
CHARLES WEISS/JERUSALEM

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LABOR UNREST IN IRAN

ANNCR:

THE ANTI-GOVERNMENT VIOLENCE AND BLOODSHED WHICH SPREAD ACROSS IRAN IN AUGUST AND EARLY SEPTEMBER IN THE NAME OF RELIGIOUS DISSATISFACTION WITH THE WAY THE SHAH IS PROCEEDING WITH HIS MODERNIZATION PROGRAM HAS GIVEN WAY LATELY TO THE MORE CONVENTIONAL PHENOMENON OF LABOR UNREST. CHARLES WEISS HAS THIS BACKGROUND REPORT.

VOICF:

THE TOP-HEAVY BUREAUCRACY IN IRAN EMPLOYS OVER EIGHT HUNDRED THOUSAND PEOPLE. SINCE THE BEGINNING OF SEPTEMBER ALMOST ALL OF THEM HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN A SERIES OF STRIKES. FIRST TO WALK OUT WERE THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS WORKERS WHO WON THEIR BATTLE FOR HIGHER PAY AFTER A WEEK-LONG STOPPAGE. OTHER AGENCIES HAVE SIMPLY FOLLOWED SUIT. BY THIS WEEK THE LIST OF STRIKE-BOUND PLACES HAS INCLUDED THE NATIONAL PETROLEUM COMPANY, WATER WORKS, ELECTRIC POWER STATIONS, AND EVEN TEHRAN'S STATE-RUN HOSPITALS AND CLINICS. THE BUREAU OF STATISTICS SAYS THAT THE COST OF LIVING HAS RISEN IN URBAN AREAS BY SEVENTY ONE PERCENT IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS -- WITH RENTS AND SOME FOOD STUFFS UP OVER A HUNDRED PERCENT. WAGES HAVE FALLEN FAR BEHIND. TO MEET SALARY DEMANDS, THE GOVERNMENT PLANS A NUMBER OF CUTBACKS IN DEVELOPMENT AND MILITARY EXPENDITURES, EVERY THING FROM NUCLEAR POWER INSTALLATIONS TO ORDERS FOR NEW SUBMARINES AND TANKS.

VIOLENCE HAS NOT VANISHED COMPLETELY FROM IRAN. THERE HAVE BEEN FAIRLY REGULAR CLASHES BETWEEN DEMONSTRATORS

AND THE FORCES OF LAW AND ORDER, BUT NOTHING APPROACHING THE BLOODLETTING OF EARLY SEPTEMBER. SIGNIFICANTLY, SOME OF THE DISORDER HAS SPREAD TO CITIFS WHERE MARTIAL LAW WAS N-O-T IMPOSED DURING THE SEPTEMBER DISTURBANCES.

EVERY SINCE THE LATEST WAVE OF CLASHES BEGAN THIS WINTER THEY FOLLOWED A CYCLICAL PATTERN. UNDER THE MOSLEM INSPIRATION GUIDING MOST OF THE DEMONSTRATORS, THE FORTIETH DAY AFTER THE DEATH OF SOMEONE IS A DAY OF SPFCIAL MOURNING AND IF DEATH WAS NOT NATURAL THE PFRSON WHO KILLED HIM IS A TARGET FOR REVENGE. THE NINETEENTH OF OCTOBER IS THE FORTIETH DAY AFTER THE MASSACRE IN JALEH SQUARE IN TEHERAN WHERE OVER A HUNDRED DEMONSTRATORS DIED AFTER SOLDIFRS FIRED INTO A CROWD. POLICE FRANKLY EXPECT TROUBLF. SINCE WEDNESDAY NO NEWSPAPERS HAVE APPEARED IN TEHERAN. THE MARTIAL LAW AUTHORITIES HAVE SENT CENSORS TO THE EDITORIAL OFFICES OF TWO PAPERS AND WHEN THE STAFF WALKED OUT IN PROTEST FIVE OTHER DAILIES CLOSED IN SOLIDARITY. AFTER A MEETING BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER JAAFFR SHARIF-FMAMI AND THE EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS THURSDAY NIGHT THE PAPERS ARE EXPECTED TO REAPPEAR SUNDAY WITHOUT THE CENSORS. SOME OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT THIS WAS THE GOAL SOUGHT BY THE AUTHORITIES -- THAT THE FOUR DAY CLOSURE HAS CONTRIBUTED TO A GENERAL COOLING OFF.

WJL/PY